

FORUM ARTICLE

The Hawaiian Entomological Society in the Year 2000¹

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ABSTRACT. There have been few changes in the major functions of the Hawaiian Entomological Society (HES) since its start in the early 1900s. To stimulate greater interest and support for the Society and the *Proceedings of the Hawaiian Entomological Society*, several changes are recommended in current operations of both entities. Monthly HES business meetings should be reduced to 3 per year and an annual conference established. Continuation of the quarterly newsletter would provide greater communication among the membership. The Notes & Exhibitions section should be eliminated from the *Proceedings*, and continued as a section in the newsletter. The role of the *Proceedings* could be expanded to better represent Pacific Basin entomology. Voting on membership applications should be abolished unless specific membership criteria are established. Development of an official HES logo is necessary to increase Society visibility. Society positions on current scientific issues of public concern must be developed by membership consensus and made available for public use if requested.

The Hawaiian Entomological Society (HES) was established on 26 January 1905 with the intent of more effectively promoting the science of entomology in the Hawaiian Islands (Kirkaldy & Swezey, 1906). From its start, the Society met monthly, had speakers give presentations on their scientific work, and provided time for members to exhibit and discuss new and interesting arthropods and other subjects (Notes & Exhibitions). To date, the Society continues the same basic program format. However, during the last 86 years the world and entomology have changed dramatically. Today we can sit in our offices and speak by telephone to colleagues on the U.S. mainland, in China and Europe as if they were right beside us. Manuscripts can be sent inexpensively by facsimile machines to almost any location. Furthermore, entomologists have become highly specialized in their specific areas of expertise. Given time limitations and work demands, many individuals are hesitant to attend monthly society meetings unless the program specifically involves 1) subject material directly relating to their specialty; 2) the discussion of an important or controversial issue; or 3) the speaker is of national or international stature. Given these and other changes in the world and entomology as a whole, I wish to address the question of how effectively HES serves the needs of its members inside and outside Hawai'i. Will the current format be adequate to carry HES to the Year 2000 and beyond? In analyzing the role of HES in his presidential address in 1959, Nishida (1960) stated that "Such analysis, if it is to be of value must be as frank and objective as possible." I am in total agreement with his position, and believe that it is again time that we take a very critical look at the state of our organization. I am concerned that if changes are not forthcoming, HES may not be a viable organization in the Year 2000. During her presidential address, Tenorio (1983) stated that "we should not be afraid to try new ideas" because these "may open up new possibilities for improvement and change." I believe that the Society's reluctance to try new ideas has been its downfall with respect to keeping membership interest high and the Society's journal competitive. Thus, the objectives of my presentation are to discuss recent historical trends in the life of HES; and to suggest modifications in Society operations that would potentially improve the value of HES to its members.

Major Functions of HES

Prior to 1991, the major functions of HES were the 11 regular monthly meetings; the

1. Presidential address presented at the March 1992 meeting.

annual dinner meeting; and the publication of the *Proceedings of the Hawaiian Entomological Society* (PHES). Monthly meetings usually included a 1-hour program presented by an invited speaker; a business section; and the presentation of Notes & Exhibitions by Society members. The annual dinner meeting provided an opportunity for the HES President to address the Society on any subject dealing with entomology, science or the Society. The Society occasionally provided other services to its members such as the publication of the common names of Hawaii's insects (Mau et al. 1990). It also provided community service such as the presentation of awards for the best entomological science fair projects at the Hawaii State Science and Engineering Fair.

In 1991, the Society experimented with 2 new functions. One was the publication of a quarterly newsletter which was distributed to the membership. The newsletter provided members with current articles concerning entomology and entomologists in the Pacific Basin. Additionally, it provided highlights of the Notes & Exhibition presentations made in the monthly meetings held during the quarter that the newsletter was published. The second function was the organization and implementation of a 2-day regional entomology conference, which was first held in October 1991. This was the first major conference held by the Society in its 86-year history. The conference included submitted papers as well as 2 symposia, "Towards *Coptotermes* termite IPM: in recognition of Minoru Tamashiro" and "Biological control in the 1990s: forging inroads into pesticide dominated agroecosystems." More than 202 entomologists attended the conference with 55 submitted papers and 16 symposia talks given.

Major Functions of HES After 1991

The newsletter and regional conference were experimental endeavors on behalf of HES. The objectives were to stimulate interest in the Society and entomology in Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin among both HES members and non-members in the Pacific Basin and the entomology community at large. At this time, no plans have been made by the Society to continue these activities past 1991. Of particular importance are the costs to the Society in terms of funds and member participation requirements. Can the Society afford monthly meetings, publication of a scientific journal, a quarterly newsletter, and an annual conference? The publication of the PHES, a newsletter, and the production of an annual conference all require significant monetary expenditures as well as coordinated efforts among some proportion of the Society's membership. In contrast, monthly meetings require a minimal, but continuous effort (speaker arrangements, officer attendance) with no monetary cost (except for refreshments purchased through donated funds), but appear to be the most unpopular or least appreciated function of the Society. Some HES officers have stated that they would prefer to invest their time in organizing an annual conference rather than participating in the monthly meetings as they now stand. For HES to be more effective in meeting membership needs, I believe that it is time for major changes in the functions of the Society.

Should We Initiate Annual HES-Sponsored Conferences?

This question should be addressed in light of the outcome of the October 1991 conference. With respect to conference attendance, 202 individuals registered as attendees. Of those, 82 registered specifically to attend the urban entomology symposium. Total registration fees collected from 180 attendees totaled ca. \$6,380.00 with an additional \$1,110.00 collected from those participants who attended the HES-coordinated conference luncheon. An average of \$44.18 per person was collected in registration fees from individuals attending the entire 2-day conference. Actual cost of the conference (without luncheon costs) to the Society was estimated to be \$4,027.29. Cost per individual attending the 2-

day conference was \$41.09. Considering the additional fees received from the urban entomology symposium, the average cost per individual was \$22.38. Estimated net income from the conference was ca. \$2,330, of which \$850 was placed into an Urban Entomology Fund. The remaining \$1,480 was put into the Society's general fund.

Forty-three percent of the conference attendees were HES members. More than 90% of the participants were from Hawai'i with ca. 7% from the U.S. Mainland and 2.5% from outside the USA. This indicates 2 points. First, there are many individuals involved in entomological endeavors in Hawai'i who are not members of HES. The Society should make an effort to recruit these individuals into its ranks. Second, only about 55% of the HES membership in Hawai'i attended the conference. The University of Hawaii at Manoa had the greatest representation at the conference with 49 individuals including both on-campus and off-campus personnel. The Hawaii State Department of Agriculture was well represented with 21 individuals attending. The USDA-ARS Tropical Fruit & Vegetable Laboratory, Bishop Museum, and University of Hawaii at Hilo had fewer than 7 representatives each.

The conference generated comments from several of the HES membership. Vincent P. Jones, University of Hawaii at Manoa, stated that he thought that "the meetings have significantly boosted the society's prestige both locally and nationally" and that he expected "that in the future this program will be considered a milestone for the Society and an indicator of a new vitality, which will affect all aspects of HES." Mary Purcell, USDA-ARS, Tropical Fruit and Vegetable Laboratory, Kapa'a, Kaua'i, wrote that "The HES meeting was super! I am glad I went to it." From the Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Sabina F. Swift commented that the "HES Conference we just had was not only top caliber performance by the organizers and the speakers but also the most effective way of knowing the members of the entomology community—who they are and what they do." Minoru Tamashiro, Emeritus Professor, University of Hawaii at Manoa, observed that the "large number registering for the Conference and the significant and interesting papers presented indicates that there was a need and demand for such a Conference."

Given the large number of entomologists working in Hawai'i and the diversity of their interests; the lack of an organized annual conference series that specifically targets Pacific Basin entomology; the positive response of the entomology community to the 1991 conference; and the monetary affordability of conference implementation in Hawai'i, it appears that there is good justification and support for HES to initiate an annual conference. In addition to providing a needed service as M. Tamashiro observed, HES visibility would increase significantly on the national and international level. Potentially this would lead to a greater number of internationally recognized entomologists visiting Hawai'i for the purpose of scientific exchange and cooperation. There could be benefits for the Society's journal though increased submissions of manuscripts from researchers outside of Hawai'i.

Should Monthly Society Meetings Be Continued?

Anyone who has routinely attended the monthly HES meetings will readily acknowledge that the meetings have minimum attraction for most HES members. Within Hawai'i there are about 150 members (about 60% of total membership) who could potentially attend the monthly meetings, however, only about 10–20 members (excluding the HES officers)—less than 10% of the entire membership—routinely attend. This attendance record has received criticism over the years. Nishida (1960) labeled it as "somewhat of a disappointment" in his presidential address. Tenorio (1985) summed up the 1983 attendance record as "appalling" when participation in the monthly meetings was lowest to that date.

The membership was surveyed over the years to identify factors (e.g., meeting location and times, program speakers, refreshments) contributing to poor attendance. However, changes made in the meetings based on the survey responses have had little impact on attendance. Thus, one may question the value of the monthly meetings to the Society when there exists a more effective meeting forum such as an annual conference. Additionally, the popularity of the annual dinner meeting has declined over the years resulting in its cancellation in some years.

I suggest that the Society adopt a new annual agenda that limits the monthly meetings to no more than 3 annually and implements an annual conference that supports the presentation of submitted papers, organized symposia, and perhaps posters. HES business meetings with the typical hour program and Notes & Exhibition section could be scheduled in January, July and October with the annual conference held in April. Business meetings could be held at night or on Saturdays, thereby permitting more members to attend. The business meetings would permit continued operation of the Society and provide an opportunity for the Program Committee to be highly selective in the speakers recruited for the program at each meeting. The Program Committee may wish to have individuals selected as recipients of the annual awards *HES Entomologist of the Year* and *Lifetime Excellence in Entomology* to be part of the program. This is in contrast to the current situation in which it becomes difficult to recruit 11 speakers during the year who will attract a large number of members to each meeting. Additionally, the Society may wish to allocate funds to bring in 1 or 2 special speakers annually. One alternative to the 3 business meetings and annual conference schedule might be that of 2 business meetings, 1 dinner meeting and annual conference. However, given the variable interest in the annual dinner meeting, it might be more effective and less trouble to have the annual dinner meeting as part of the annual conference. Ninety individuals attended the conference luncheon in October 1991 as compared to less than 50 attendees at the dinner meeting in January 1992. It would be appropriate for the President's address to be presented at the annual conference.

As part of this modification in Society activities, I recommend that the quarterly newsletter be continued to provide communication among the membership, coordination of Society activities, and a forum for Society issues. Its current publication schedule (March, June, September & December) could be modified to make it a more effective communiqué. Although the number of monthly meetings annually would be reduced, individuals would still have an opportunity to provide material for the Notes & Exhibitions section in the newsletter.

Should the Role of the *Proceedings* be Expanded?

The PHES serves a useful purpose for entomology in Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. However, it has become apparent to many entomologists that the PHES is declining with respect to its role as a predominant entomological journal in the Pacific Basin. I discussed some of these problems in the September HES Newsletter (Vol. 1, No. 3). In the newsletter article I pointed out the decline in the number of papers published in PHES by authors from outside of Hawai'i during the last 40 years; the significant increases in time to publish the meeting's minutes and Notes & Exhibitions during the last 20 years; and the subtle, but real decline in overall manuscript submissions over the last 40 years. I believe that it is time to reshape the PHES into a competitive nationally recognized entomological journal. If we do not improve the "health" of the PHES, the decline in submission rates suggests that it may not survive to the Year 2000. I believe that many HES members recognize these problems, but do not want to deal with them given the magnitude of the changes required to remedy the problem.

Efforts should be made to upgrade the professional image of the PHES to a level equal to national and international journals. Efforts must be made to make the PHES a more attractive publication vehicle for HES members. Additionally, the focus must be broadened to include tropical entomology throughout the world. Many changes will be required, but the overall result should increase the number and quality of manuscripts published in the PHES. Modifications are necessary in the areas outlined below.

Composition and Responsibilities of the Editorial Board

For most, if not all, of the years the PHES has been published, the Editorial Board has been composed of 4 to 5 entomologists located within the boundaries of Hawai'i. Early in the history of the PHES, this composition was adequate. However, to attract papers from a greater geographical area, it will be necessary to expand the Editorial Board to include entomologists from the U.S. Mainland and several locations throughout the Pacific Basin (e.g., Guam, Japan, Australia, Philippines, Thailand, etc.). This will give our journal a more national/international focus and should immediately increase the submission rate. This expansion of the Editorial Board would potentially have a beneficial effect at "home" because it may increase the submission rate on the part of Hawaii's entomologists who are reluctant to publish in a "local" journal. There are many outstanding scientists throughout the Pacific Basin who would be more than happy to serve on the Editorial Board.

In the past, Editorial Board members have served as the primary manuscript reviewers. This required that they review as many as 20 manuscripts within a relatively short time. This is an unreasonable demand to make of any scientist who has the responsibilities of a regular position, and who is not being monetarily rewarded for such efforts. Many, if not all, reviews were not anonymous. This made it difficult to give a critical review given the possibility that the review might precipitate an unwanted confrontation with the manuscript authors. Additionally, Board members were often asked to review material that they were not qualified to judge. I believe that it is time to initiate an anonymous peer review system. Some Board members will occasionally review manuscripts, but more often than not, manuscripts will be sent to qualified scientists who have a proven publication record in the appropriate discipline.

Lastly, the responsibilities of the Editorial Board will change from reviewing manuscripts to establishing and maintaining publication policies and providing input and judgment with respect to complaints of dissatisfied authors.

Manuscript Review Policies

A peer review system, similar to that used by the Entomological Society of America for its journals, is needed. All manuscripts would be peer-reviewed by 2 anonymous reviewers selected by the PHES Editor in coordination with members of the PHES Editorial Board. Reviewers would be requested to review and return manuscripts within 3 weeks of receipt (standard policy for many journals). In case of a lack of agreement in the judgment of reviewers (i.e., accept vs. reject manuscript), a third reviewer would be selected to provide judgment.

Proceedings Publication Times

Currently, the PHES is 3 volumes behind in its logical publication timetable. This affects the meeting minutes and Notes & Exhibitions for the last 3 years, but not the submitted papers. At this point in time I cannot imagine that we will ever make up the 3 unpublished volumes if 12 to 15 papers must be accumulated before each volume can be published. There is a precedent for combining volumes to alleviate this problem. This

should be a high priority. To reduce publication times, the option of "electronic submission" should be initiated in which authors would submit a hard copy of the manuscript and a copy on a computer disk. This would cut publication times and costs in half because of the reduced work load for the printer. In the past, the PHES was published within 3 months of the December meeting. Now it takes greater than 2 years to publish the volume for a given meeting year. We should set a target date of 3 months after year's end for PHES publication.

Number, Quality and Diversity of Published Papers

Many approaches can be taken to increase the number of papers submitted to the PHES. Of great significance would be the announcement of changes made in the PHES' review procedures and the expansion of the focus of the journal. This can be easily done by describing these changes in the HES Newsletter and by sending out announcements to entomologists who work in the Pacific Basin (California, Japan, Mexico, Australia, Philippines, etc.). During the last 8 years, few if any efforts were made to enhance manuscript submission rates. Additional options are to include in the announcements a list of the expanded Editorial Board and a list of selected papers recently published in the PHES.

A change in the review process will probably increase the quality of the papers published in the PHES. This will mean that some papers will inevitably be rejected, but the result will be a higher quality publication. It may also alter the reputation of PHES as an endpoint for low quality papers that can not be published elsewhere. Efforts can also be made to invite well-known entomologists to publish reviews of their work in their field. This would be appropriate for speakers at monthly HES meetings. Another strategy would be to establish a forum section in the PHES where authors can publish papers in which new ideas are presented. Many of the HES presidential addresses have fallen along this line, but it has never been exploited as an outlet for regular authors.

Should the "Notes & Exhibitions" Section be Maintained in the Proceedings?

Recently, the concept of the Operational Note was established in the PHES. This reduced the number of pages printed under the "Notes & Exhibitions" section, and it opened the way to review these notes. The importance of the Notes & Exhibitions section has decreased over the life of the PHES. According to Tenorio (1985), the mean number of submissions published under this heading was 88 per year from 1916 to 1926, but had decreased to 37 per year from 1980 to 1988. In 1991, only 19 articles were submitted under this section, and this number will probably decrease in time. One problem with material published under this section is that it is impossible to retrieve information through computer searches, thus one must read all the notes to locate specific information. I believe the "Notes & Exhibitions" should be eliminated from the PHES and all worthy notes, based on peer review, be converted to the Operational Notes category. All records of new arthropod introductions should be placed under the Operational Notes category. Now that we have a Notes & Exhibition section in the HES Newsletter, the less important articles will appear there even if not published in the PHES. Many of the Notes & Exhibitions are highly specific and are sometimes of little interest to anyone except the presenter. It may be desirable at some time to change the name "Operational Notes" to "Scientific Notes."

Should We Develop a Society Logo for Better Recognition?

Currently, the Society has no official logo or emblem that people can identify as the standard for the organization. There does exist the drawing of the *Plagithmysus*. (Cerambycidae) within an ellipse, which appears on some of the covers of the PHES. However, the logo is incomplete because there is no reference to the Society associated

with it. I suggest that the Society make an effort to further develop this artwork into a effective logo or, perhaps, the Society may wish to develop an entirely different logo. Once an official logo is developed, it could be used on our application forms, official stationary, newsletter and journal as well as providing artwork for HES t-shirts, coffee mugs, and other paraphernalia. This would bring more visibility to the Society and perhaps lead to increased membership.

Should We Maintain the Practice of Electing Applicants to the Society?

The Society's constitution requires that applicants for membership be voted upon at business meetings prior to entry into HES. After acceptance by the membership, dues are collected from the new members. I believe that this procedure has 2 significant flaws. First, I do not know of any minimum criteria that the Society has established to specify whether or not an individual is "qualified" to be a member. Without established criteria, it appears to me that if an individual was denied membership and wished to legally press the issue, the Society would not have an adequate defense for its ruling. Over the last 9 years that I have attended meetings, I have never known of anyone to be denied membership as a result of the vote. Thus, is it truly necessary to vote upon each individual? Some might say that by reviewing the membership application prior to the vote, the members have a chance to hear about the applicants background and current activities. This may be true, but we now have 2 sections in the quarterly newsletter that spotlight new members and provides details about them. Second, the logistics of obtaining the applicant's dues following the Society vote can be a problem from the standpoint that the treasurer has to contact the individual a second time. If the dues were submitted with the application, this would reduce the processing time of the application and allow the treasurer additional time to deal with more important duties.

Should We Develop Society Platforms on Critical Issues?

During my year as President, I occasionally received requests from organizations and individuals for information on the Society's position on politically sensitive issues such as conservation of Hawaiian endemic species; the impact of biological control on the environment; and the need for eradication of pestiferous fruit flies. Given the diversity of the HES membership, it was clear that there were members who supported various sides of each issue. Usually, the information was required by the following week or sometimes within a couple of days. If appropriate, I wrote a response that entailed the general viewpoints of the membership, always including the diversity of positions to be found among the membership. It became apparent to me that the Society should form a committee to establish Society platforms on major issues that are common to Pacific Basin entomology. This would be in contrast to the role of the previously established Liaison Committee, which was supposed to provide this type of information, but without consensus from the membership on the content of the response. It is apparent that given the composition of the Liaison Committee, appointed by the President, the response could be biased as a reflection of the Committee's views. Additionally, information was often required immediately, providing little time to convene Committee members. If the Society could develop written platforms that reflect the diversity of opinions of the members, as shown by a membership vote on each platform, then this information would be readily available for the Society to respond to such requests.

SUMMARY

There have been few changes in the major functions of the Hawaiian Entomological Society since its start in the early 1900s. We are now on the doorstep of the Year 2000,

and it is highly questionable as to in what condition the Society will be when the next century arrives. I believe that it is time to initiate several changes in the Society and its journal to stimulate greater interest and support for both. Monthly business meetings should be reduced to 3 per year and an annual conference established. Continuation of the quarterly newsletter would provide greater communication among the membership. The Notes & Exhibitions section should be eliminated from the PHES, and continued as a section in the newsletter. The role of the PHES could be expanded to better represent Pacific Basin entomology. Voting on membership applications should be abolished unless specific membership criteria are established. Development of an official HES logo is necessary to increase Society visibility. Society positions on current scientific issues of public concern must be developed by membership consensus and made available for public use if requested.

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